<u>**CLAIMS**</u>:

What is claimed as new and desired to be protected by Letters Patent of the United States is:

1.   A method of mechanizing a simulator for simulating a selected system producing responses to requests comprising:

interactively creating a representation of at least one rule defining a response including a representation of at least a portion of a request and a corresponding response of the selected system;

providing a response engine compatible with the representation of the rule; and

allowing access by the response engine to the representation of the at least one rule, whereby

receipt, at the response engine of a request forming part of the rule will generate the corresponding reply.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the response is dynamic.

3.   The method of claim 2 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to a file.

4.   The method of claim 2 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to a cache.

5.   The method of claim 2 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to a database.

6.   The method of claim 2 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to the message.

7.   The method of claim 1 wherein the representation of the at least one rule is metadata.

8.   The method of claim 7 which further includes compiling the metadata representing the at least one rule.

9.   The method of claim 8 wherein creating the metadata comprises interactively using raw data.

10.   The method of claim 8 wherein creating the metadata comprises interactively using fixed format data.

11.   The method of claim 8 wherein creating the metadata comprises interactively using XML data.

12.   The method of claim 8 where interactively creating metadata is implemented with a graphical user interface.

13.   The method of claim 8 which further includes storing the metadata.

14.   The method of claim 13 which further includes editing the metadata using the graphical user interface to produce edited metadata to alter the at least one rule and storing the edited metadata in the database.

15.   The method of claim 14 which further includes compiling the edited metadata to produce edited compiled logic and allowing access by the response engine to the edited compiled logic whereby a selected system producing responses produced by the altered rule may be simulated.

16.   The method of claim 1 which includes storing more than one rule.

17.   A simulator for simulating a selected system producing responses to requests comprising:

means supporting interactive creation of a representation of at least one rule defining a response including a representation of at least a portion of a request and a corresponding response of the selected system;

a response engine compatible with the representation of the rule; and

an access path from the response engine to the representation of the at least one rule, whereby

receipt, at the response engine of a request forming part of the rule will generate the corresponding reply.

18.   The simulator of claim 17 which further includes storage for data accessed by at least one said rule whereby the simulated response is dynamic.

19.   The simulator claim 18 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to a file for access to the data.

20. The simulator of claim 18 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to a cache for access to the data.

21. The simulator claim 18 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to a database for access to the data.

22. The simulator claim 18 wherein a parameter of the response allows access to a message for access to the data.

23. The simulator of claim 17 wherein the representation of the at least one rule is metadata.

24. The simulator claim 17 which further includes means for compiling the metadata representing the at least one rule into compiled logic.

25. The simulator of claim 17 which includes a graphical user interface for interactively creating the at least one rule

26. The simulator of claim 25 which further includes means for editing the metadata using the graphical user interface to produce edited metadata to alter the at least one rule.

27. A method of testing logic based components comprising:

mechanizing a simulation of one of the components,

connecting the simulation to the other component; and

directing a flow of information to the connected simulation and component for testing purposes.

28.   The method of claim 27 wherein the flow of information is directed to the component and a flow of information from the component is directed to the simulation.

29.   The method of claim 27 wherein the flow of information is directed to the simulation and a flow of information from the simulation is directed to the component.

30.   The method of claim 27 wherein mechanizing a simulation of one of the components comprises:

interactively creating a representation of at least one rule defining a response including a representation of at least a portion of a request and a corresponding response of the selected system;

providing a response engine compatible with the representation of the rule; and

allowing access by the response engine to the representation of the at least one rule, whereby

receipt, at the response engine of a request forming part of the rule will generate the corresponding reply.

31.   The method of claim 30 wherein the request represents an instance in a flow of information from the component.

32.   The method of claim 30 wherein the reply represents an instance in a
flow if information to the component.